

From: [Hingtgen, Robert J](#)
To: ["Patrick BROWN"](#); ["Asha Bleier"](#)
Cc: [Gungle, Ashley](#); [Hofreiter, Larry](#); [Ramaiya, Jarrett](#); [Waterman, Ryan R.](#)
Subject: RE: 3910 120005, Soitec Solar -- RE: Soitec - Key Viewshed Map TDS Gen-Tie
Date: Tuesday, February 26, 2013 2:50:36 PM

Pat and Asha,

We are going to elevate the issue of undergrounding and hope to get back to you next week with further direction.

However, if we ultimately do allow analysis of the overhead transmission line as shown, then I have the following comments concerning the Gen-Tie Viewshed Map:

- 1) Add to the legend what the green shaded area signifies. I'm assuming this is the viewshed of the transmission line.
- 2) Add the locations of Ribbonwood Road and McCain Valley Road to the map
- 3) KOP 6 is over 2000' from where the overhead line begins east of Tierra Del Sol Road.
- 4) Add a KOP near the intersection of the railroad and Tierra Del Sol Road looking east-northeast.
- 5) KOP 7 – add view looking to the east – northeast. Ensure the view to the south shows the overhead line and is not blocked by a roadside tree.
- 6) Add a KOP about 1000' south of where the line would cross Jewel Valley Road looking west to northeast.
- 7) Add a KOP on Old Hwy 80 in line with the last two transmission poles/towers, with a view to the southwest looking back at the substation and transmission line.

Can you please also give us an idea what kind of pole/tower configuration will be required, as well as a brief comparison of the scope of work and cost for undergrounding the lines versus placing overhead lines?

Thanks,

Robert Hingtgen, Planner III
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From: Patrick BROWN [mailto:Patrick.BROWN@soitec.com]
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2013 1:23 PM
To: Hingtgen, Robert J
Cc: Gungle, Ashley; Hofreiter, Larry; Ramaiya, Jarrett; Waterman, Ryan R.; 'Asha Bleier'
Subject: RE: 3910 120005, Soitec Solar -- RE: Soitec - Key Viewshed Map TDS Gen-Tie

Rob,

Portions of the gen-tie will be placed below ground when it reduces environmental impacts. In places where the gen-tie will be less visible, we propose to go overhead obviously to save money,

reduce environmental impacts to biological and cultural resources, but it also reduces air quality impacts. Overall spanning a transmission line above ground reduces environmental impacts. When you underground, you are trading one impact for three. As far as the GP policy, this policy is not being used correctly. That policy is meant for new residential and commercial development and is not meant for high voltage transmission which is anything above 34.5kV and above. Our line is a high voltage 138kV transmission line and it is not low voltage 12kV distribution. I have included a discussion below that clearly shows that these ordinances and Board Policy support above ground transmission. The policy that is stated in the Scoping letter is intended for low voltage distribution and the following ordinance implement those policies.

A. Existing County Ordinances and Board Policy Allow for high voltage Transmission lines to be above ground:

(1) Subdivision Ordinance Section 81.404, which states the following, “Install underground all new and existing utility distribution facilities, including cable television lines and other video service facilities, within the boundaries of any new subdivision or within any half road abutting a new subdivision...” Furthermore it states, “This subsection shall not apply to the installation and maintenance of overhead electric **transmission lines** in excess of 34,500 volts (34.5kV) and Long distance and trunk communication facilities...”

(2) Centerline Ordinance Section 51.312 that states the following, “ (a) A property owner subject to section [51.303](#) shall make arrangements with the serving utility companies for all existing utility distribution facilities, including cable television lines, to place the facilities underground along the frontage of the property. This section shall not apply to the installation and maintenance of overhead electric **transmission lines** in excess of 34,500 volts and long distance and trunk communications facilities.”

(3) Underground Utility District Regulations Section 89.106.d, States the following, “ This division and any ordinance adopted pursuant to Section [89.103](#) hereof shall, unless otherwise provided in such ordinance, not apply to the following types of facilities: (d) Poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures used for the **transmission** of electric energy at nominal voltages in excess of 34,500 volts (34.5kV).

(4) Board Policy I-92: “Undergrounding may be waived if any of the following criteria are met: “The cost of undergrounding is prohibitively high based on utility company estimates.”

We can sit down to discuss further, but this is the approach we have taken and the stance we have always had with the Department and the Decision makers. Now naturally, the decision makers can determine that this is all wrong and that those ordinances do not clearly state what they say, but we have time to worry about that.

Thanks for you in advance with your help on this,

pb

From: Hingtgen, Robert J [<mailto:Robert.Hingtgen@sdcounty.ca.gov>]
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2013 12:08 PM
To: 'Asha Bleier'; Patrick BROWN
Cc: Gungle, Ashley; Hofreiter, Larry; Ramaiya, Jarrett
Subject: 3910 120005, Soitec Solar -- RE: Soitec - Key Viewshed Map TDS Gen-Tie

Asha and Pat,

Under the heading "Major Project Issues" in Scoping Letters for all Soitec Solar projects, it was stated that staff would require the transmission lines to be placed underground, in relation to General Plan conformance and making Major Use Permit Findings. General Plan Policy COS-11.7 requires new development to place utilities underground, and the Tule Wind Project was required to underground its transmission lines south of I-8. Please explain why approximately 5 miles of the proposed transmission line is shown as "overhead."

Thanks,

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From: Asha Bleier [<mailto:ableier@dudek.com>]
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2013 10:35 AM
To: Hingtgen, Robert J; Gungle, Ashley
Cc: Patrick BROWN (Patrick.BROWN@soitec.com); David Hochart; Josh Saunders
Subject: RE: Soitec - Key Viewshed Map TDS Gen-Tie

Rob and Ashley,

We were able to reduce the panoramic viewshed images so you don't need to use the FTP site; please see attached. I also wanted to provide you with the rationale for these two key view point selections; see below. Can you please confirm your receipt of my two emails at your earliest convenience?

Key View 6 provides an open, broad view of the characteristic landscape of the Tierra Del Sol area. From Key View 6, the juxtaposition of the valley landscape, characterized by agricultural uses, low-density rural residential development, and oak tree clusters, and the chaparral and boulder covered ridgeline landscape forms an otherwise coherent and harmonious rural visual pattern. In addition, Key View 6 includes views of local electrical and communication infrastructure and fencing which further contextualizes the character of the project area. From this location, several proposed gen-tie structures would be clearly visible and the vertical form, regular line, and dull grey color of structures would be apparent to motorists.

Key View 7 is located atop the high point of Jewel Valley Road and provides an open, relatively unobstructed view of surrounding ridgelines and more distant mountainous terrain in Mexico. The chaparral and boulder covered ridgeline landscape is prominent from this location; however, beyond

the visual limits of the roadway the terrain drops and the low grasses and oak trees clusters of the local area valley landscape encapsulates the foreground viewing experience. From this location, the proposed gen-tie line would traverse the middleground ridgeline north of Rattlesnake Mountain (the pyramidal and tall terrain to the south), would proceed northwards towards the expanse of exposed tan soils located southwest of the viewing location, and would then turn to the east and eventually cross Jewel Valley Road. The nearest gen-tie pole would be located in the foreground, beyond the visual limits of the roadway, and would be skylined. From this location, the visual effects of the gen-tie line would be evident to passing motorists and local area residents.

Thanks,

Asha R. Bleier, AICP, LEED AP BD+C

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From: Asha Bleier

Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 2:04 PM

To: Robert.Hingtgen@sdcounty.ca.gov; Gungle, Ashley (Ashley.Gungle@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Cc: Patrick BROWN (Patrick.BROWN@soitec.com); David Hochart (dhochart@dudek.com); Josh Saunders (jasaunders@dudek.com)

Subject: Soitec - Key Viewshed Map TDS Gen-Tie

Hi Rob and Ashley,

Could you please review our proposed key viewshed map for the Tierra del Sol gen-tie portion of the Soitec project? See attached PDF; there are two key view points (6 and 7).

Also for your review are the viewshed images. The file sizes are too large to email, so FTP site instructions are attached. We included panoramic viewshed images for Key View 6 (Tierra Del Sol Road looking north) and Key View 7 (Jewel Valley Road looking south) because the views available from the Tierra Del Sol Road and Jewel Valley Road are broad and open. We feel that these images most accurately depict the visual experience of the project from these viewing locations. Additionally, because the spacing of the gen-tie poles will lead the eye and cause viewers to "scan" the landscape, a panoramic view would most likely represent how one would view this particular visual environment.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,

Asha R. Bleier, AICP, LEED AP BD+C

Senior Planner

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